

## **COVID-19 RESPONSE AND PHASED REOPENING PLAN DOWNERS GROVE PUBLIC LIBRARY**

**INTRODUCTION:** COVID-19 has forced the library building to close temporarily, but it has not closed our library. Virtual services continue, developed and provided through the talents and creativity of the library's extraordinary staff. This document, COVID-19 Response and Phased Reopening Plan, outlines proposed stages to reopen our library building. This phased strategy keeps the health and safety of the staff and public as the highest priority of Downers Grove Public Library. In this time, our decisions will be health-driven rather than customer service driven. In addition to compliance with national and state Executive Orders, the library will follow the recommendations of the DuPage County Health Department, Illinois Department of Public Health, and the CDC for staff and public safety.

### **Caveats and Considerations:**

- We don't know when we will implement any phase of this plan.
- We don't know how long each phase will be implemented, if phases may be combined, or if public health recommendations require reverting to a previous phase.
- We don't know if we will receive clear public health guidance for public libraries, or if we will have to rely on the general consensus of public health agencies and others in our profession.
- SWAN is seeking to achieve uniformity in the reopening schedule of its member libraries, so to some extent we may be required to conform to timelines set by SWAN.
- We don't know when RAILS will resume delivery.
- Summer Reading will be planned with all virtual programs. If restrictions ease, in-person programs may be added back at that time.

- Good faith attempts will be made to rotate the in-building staff so that all take turns working in-library and telecommuting. Complete equity of staff time in-library and telecommuting is not possible, given specialization of tasks.
- The Board of Library Trustees approved Fine Free through August 2, both to help those in our community struggling financially as a result of the COVID-19 crisis and to mitigate cash handling concerns.

## **REOPENING PHASES**

*General overview of the phased open approach*

### **Phase 1: Return of Materials Only**

Library building is closed to the public. Staff come in to prepare to reopen the building. Book drops reopen for materials return.

Date Implemented: Monday, May 4, 2020 (Actual Date: May 4, 2020)

**Context:** Restore Illinois Phase 2 implemented for our area. Social distancing is recommended. Face masks are required. Infection risks are still high. Supplies are limited and restocking ability is uncertain.

**Summary:** Library building remains closed to the public. Scheduled staff start working onsite (under specific safety procedures) to prepare spaces, collections, and technology for reopening the building. Staff may work in staff and public areas. Some staff continue to work remotely. Materials return begins. Materials are quarantined according to RAILS requirements before being checked in and reshelved. RAILS delivery may not be available.

### **Phase 2: Curbside Pickup**

Library provides curbside service for access to physical materials, with reduced hours. Library building is closed to the public. Staff continue to

prepare to reopen the building.

Anticipated Date: Monday, May 18, 2020 (Actual Date: May 20, 2020 through July 5, 2020, November 16, 2020 anticipated through January 31, 2021)

**Context:** Restore Illinois Phase 2 implemented for our area. Social distancing is recommended. Face masks are required. Infection risks are still high. Adequate supplies are on hand to comply with safety recommendations for public and staff, but supply needs and availability are uncertain.

**Summary:** Curbside pickup service will begin for only those materials available in the library. SWAN holds and delivery may not be available. Reference and readers advisory services continue via phone, email, and chat. Curbside service procedures to be determined by the Circulation Department. Library staff bring materials to the patron's car, checked out, and place in patron's trunk. Staff wear gloves and non-medical masks. Staff in the building are limited and practicing social distancing as recommended by public health officials. Continue quarantining books for as long as advised. No reservations for study rooms or meeting rooms are accepted. Holds will be filled if and when SWAN is allowing holds. Holds will be available for curbside pickup. RAILS delivery may not be available, limiting holds to local items only.

### **Phase 3: Limited Public Service, Limited Hours**

Library reopens to provide access to physical materials, but with reduced hours. Other services are limited or restricted.

Anticipated Date: Monday, July 6, 2020 (Actual Date: July 6, 2020 through September 15, 2020, October 23, 2020 through November 15, 2020, February 1, 2021-present)

**Context:** Restore Illinois Phase 3 implemented for our area. Social

distancing is recommended. Face masks are required. Infection risks are still high. Adequate supplies are on hand to comply with safety recommendations for public and staff, but supply needs and availability are uncertain.

**Summary:** Library reopens to the public, but not to encourage extended stays or gatherings. Patrons may access materials, including self-service holds. Seating is removed from public areas. Access to Kids Room play areas is restricted. No reservations for study rooms or meeting rooms are accepted. Computer access may be offered by appointment only. Open hours may be limited to allow for materials to be shelved and holds pulled before the library opens to the public. Curbside Pickup continues to accommodate vulnerable patrons and patrons not yet comfortable coming into the library. Limits to number of patrons in the building and limits on access to children under 13 without an adult may be established. Fine free limits cash handling. Desks are staffed to allow for social distancing. Staff may be assigned to monitor patron behavior to prevent group gatherings and maintain social distance. Staff continue to offer services through chat, phone calls, and emails. Home deliveries may resume on a “no contact” basis.

#### **Phase 4: Restoring Services and Hours**

Gradual restoration of library services return to regular hours.

Anticipated Date: Restore Illinois Phase 4 implemented for our area. CDC Community Transmission Level is High. Social distancing is recommended. Face masks are required. (Actual Date: September 16, 2020 through October 23, 2020, March 1, 2021 through June 10, 2021, August 7, 2021-present)

**Context:** Physical distancing is still recommended, but infections risks are beginning to decline. Supply needs are predictable and supplies are plentiful. Rollback to this Phase occurs when infection risk begins to rise

again and may include gradual reductions in service.

**Summary:** Open hours gradually return to regular schedule, in keeping with usage patterns and as staffing allows. Visit duration increase incrementally, but extended stays or gathering remain restricted. Age for access by children without an adult returns to 8. Curbside Pickup continues to accommodate vulnerable patrons and patrons not yet comfortable coming into the library. No reservations for meeting rooms are accepted. Capacity limits and/or other restrictions continue. Seating is slowly reintroduced, configured to allow for physical distance. Computers are accessible at intervals of at least 6 feet. Limited study room use is slowly reintroduced. Reservations for seating, computer sessions, and study rooms required. Access to Kids Room play areas are restricted. Desks are staffed to allow for physical distancing. Staff may wear gloves and non-medical masks.

### **Phase 5: Bridge to New Normal**

The majority of library services and seating are reintroduced, but additional precautions are in place for the Kids Room.

Anticipated Date: Restore Illinois Phase 5 implemented for our area and vaccine availability for children under 12 anticipated. (Actual Date: June 11, 2021-August 6, 2021)

**Context :** People over the age of 12 are eligible for vaccination.

**Summary:** Masks are required in the Kids Room for patrons and staff and at programs for children and families. Toys and play areas remain unavailable. Most computers in operation. Most seating is back in public areas.

### **Phase 6: New Normal**

Service returns to “our new normal”.

Anticipated Date: Late 2021

**Context:** Restore Illinois Phase 5 implemented for our area. Vaccines are available for children age 2 and over.

**Summary:** Toys return to the Kids Room and play areas are open. Meeting rooms and conference rooms available for public use. No face masks or social distancing are required.

## **RESURGENCE MITIGATIONS**

Beginning in fall 2020, the State of Illinois changed its regions and approach to COVID-19 resurgence. As regions reached certain thresholds in COVID-19 metrics, a tiered system of resurgence mitigations was implemented rather than rolling back the Restore Illinois Phases. The Tiers, Levels 1-3, as of November 10, 2020, include some but not all elements of a rollback to a previous Restore Illinois Phase. The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) posted guidance continues to be the Restore Illinois Phase 4 information for 16 different industry categories. Public libraries' general operations fit into at least seven different categories. Under the Governor's orders, "each government body shall determine its own Essential Government Functions and identify employees and/or contractors necessary to the performance of those functions" regardless of the Phase or Tier. Resurgence Mitigation Tiers will trigger the rollback of DGPL Phases, according to the restrictions implemented in each Tier.

In summer 2021, the Centers for Disease Control updated guidance on mask wearing to recommend everyone, including vaccinated people, wear masks indoors. New information about the virulent Delta variants and its transmissibility by vaccinated people necessitated the change. Around the same time, a new county-by-county tracking system was introduced, with Community Transmission Levels of Low, Moderate, Substantial, and High.

As these levels are set by rolling 7-day statistics and are updated frequently, phase rollbacks will be incremental and remain in place until a Community Transmission Levels decline and hold at the lower level.

## **STAFF CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Phase 1: Return of Materials Only**

- Announce date book drops open or do a “soft opening”
- Open book drops.
- Staff empty book drops daily wearing gloves and non-medical masks and put books in Meeting Room, marked in groups by date.
- Quarantine items according to RAILS requirements for delivery, then check-in, and reshelve. Other materials may be handled differently, based on the type of material.
- Limited staff in building per day during limited hours, practicing social distancing as recommended by public health officials.
- Continue quarantining books for as long as advised during subsequent phases.

### ***What must be in place before this phase begins:***

- Acquire adequate non-medical masks (if possible) and gloves for staff.
- Advise staff on resources to make masks.
- Research and advise staff on best practices for glove use to avoid recontamination via gloves.

### **Phase 2: Curbside Pickup**

- Announce opening of curbside pickup of in-library materials or “soft opening”
- Patrons may be able to pick up books already on hold in building (SWAN dependent). If so, staff calls patrons with holds on shelf before closure to let them know they have materials waiting for them.
- Patrons call, email, or chat to place holds for materials currently on-shelf in the library. Staff answer phones, email, and chat, pull materials, place and trap holds. Circulation Department will create procedure for Curbside Pickup service.
- Reference and readers advisory services continue via phone, email, and chat.
- Patrons contact the library when they are outside. Library staff bring their materials to their car, checked out, in bags. Staff wear gloves and non-medical masks.
- Limited staff in building during limited hours. Curbside Pickup hours limited.
- Patron may place holds or make requests for materials by voicemail or email outside of open hours.
- When SWAN unsuspends holds, holds will begin to fill. Holds will be available for curbside pickup.
- Staff wear gloves and non-medical masks.

***What must be in place before this phase begins:***

- Acquire adequate paper bags for curbside service. May eliminate use of bags.
- Acquire adequate non-medical masks and gloves for staff.
- Advise staff on resources to make masks.
- Research and advise staff on best practices for glove use to avoid recontamination via gloves.



### **Phase 3: Limited Public Service, Limited Hours**

- Patrons may enter building to pick up holds and select materials.
- Seating and toys are not available to public. Access to Kids Room play areas is restricted.
- Limited public computer use will be available.
- Limits on access to children without an adult may be established.
- Wipe down computers with antiseptic wipes after each use.
- Wipe down self-check with antiseptic wipes after each use, if possible.
- Wipe down service desks with with EPA-approved disinfectant at intervals throughout day.
- Wipe down staff phones, computers, and mice with antiseptic wipes between shifts.
- Marks on floor for social distancing while standing in line and for maintaining appropriate distance from service desk.
- Fine Free removes some necessity of cash handling.
- Homebound deliveries may resume on a “no contact” basis such as drop off on porch or in other covered area and pick up of returns or be discontinued.
- Staff wear may wear gloves. Masks are required.

#### ***What must be in place before this phase begins:***

- Acquire adequate PPE for increased staff working in the building.
- Determine reliable source of antiseptic wipes or viable substitutes.
- Set up procedures for staff monitoring and enforcement of social distancing.

## **Phase 4: Restoring Services and Hours**

- Phase back toward full staffing. Staff still advised to telecommute for “off desk” work to avoid crowding in staff office space.
- Continued curbside service may impact hours due to staffing availability.
- Soft seating and toys are not available to public. Access to Kids Room play areas may be restricted.
- Computers will be placed in-service/out-of-service to ensure 6 feet distance between users.
- Gradually reintroduce seating at tables for public use.
- Limits on access to children without an adult may continue.
- Wipe down computers with antiseptic wipes after each use.
- Wipe down tables/chairs with EPA-approved disinfectant after each use.
- Reintroduce study rooms for public use if possible with staff needs.
- Cleaning of high touch surfaces at intervals throughout day.
- Wipe down staff phones, computers, and mice with antiseptic wipes between shifts.
- Marks on floor for social distancing while standing in line and for maintaining appropriate distance from service desk.
- Home Delivery and Satellite Stacks deliveries resume on a “no contact” basis, as allowed by the individual or organization, such as drop off on porch or in other covered area and pick up of returns.
- Staff may wear gloves. Masks are required.

### ***What must be in place before this phase begins:***

- Create plan for staff monitoring and enforcing social distancing for people moving around library, especially children/teens.

## **Phase 5: Bridge to New Normal**

- Gradually relax social distancing and use of non-medical masks, as advised by public health officials.
- Most seating returns to public areas.
- Use of Meeting and Conference Rooms by the public returns when rooms are no longer needed for storage of furniture, staff work spaces, etc.
- Phase back to full on-desk staffing.
- Toys and play areas are not available for use.
- Staff must wear masks in the public areas of the Kids Room and may wear masks or other PPE as they choose in other parts of the building.

### ***What must be in place before this phase begins:***

- Create a plan for staff monitoring and enforcing mask use in the Kid's Room and at any program for children under the age of 12 or families.

## **Phase 6: New Normal**

- Resume in-person programming for all size gatherings.
- Policies for Phased Reopening Plan no longer in force, including temporary Staff Policies and Procedures for Phased Reopening Plan.